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FM RUOMNR
DE RUEHMO #3627 224145J
ZNY CCCCC ZZN
R 111439Z OCT 79
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2586
INFO RUFLG/AMCONSUL Leningrad 7112
RUMJPG/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2241
RUSRED/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1000
RUSBLK/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0606
RUSSAE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1562
RUFXNA/USMISSION USNATO 7338
RUOMNR/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN 2253
BT
C O N F I D E N T I A L

CH: 2766

POL

CHARGE
ECON
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MOSCOW 23027

E.O. 12065: R/A
TACS: PEPR, AF, UR
SUBJECT: SOVIET MEDIA REPORT TARAKI'S DEATH

1. SOVIET NEWSPAPERS ON OCTOBER 10 AND 11 CARRIED A TERSE, ONE-SENTENCE TASS REPORT QUOTING THE AFGHAN NEWS AGENCY'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF TARAKI'S DEATH. THE TELEVISION EVENING NEWS PROGRAM VREMYA CARRIED THE SAME REPORT, SPOKEN IN SOLEMN TONES, ON OCTOBER 12. SOVIET MEDIA HAD NOT MENTIONED TARAKI SINCE THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS RESIGNATION FOR REASONS OF HEALTH SEPTEMBER 16.

2. COMMENT: SOVIET MEDIA TREATMENT OF AFGHANISTAN IN GENERAL AND AMIN IN PARTICULAR HAS DECREASED NOTICEABLY SINCE SEPTEMBER 16. THIS DEVELOPMENT MAY REFLECT SOVIET UNCERTAINTY ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN AND ABOUT AMIN'S POSITION ITSELF AFTER THE COUP AGAINST TARAKI.
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